Demand for an alternative National Highway for Sikkim

SHRI O.T. LEPCHA (Sikkim): Sikkim is a landlocked State with no air and rail connection as of now. The only lifeline of the State is NH-31A which is connecting Bagdogra to Siliguri. Often, this Highway is blocked in view of various bandhs and agitations called in the hilly areas of West Bengal. This causes a lot of hardships to the people of Sikkim whose connectivity with the country is lost. It is, therefore, proposed that there should be an alternative route available to the people of Sikkim in case of blocking of the National Highway-3lA. This alternative route can be *via* Bhutan that will connect the seven North-Eastern States. I, therefore, request the Government to consider the suggestion and give another lifeline, in the form of another National Highway, to the people of Sikkim.

SHRI SAMAN PATHAK (West Bengal): Madam, I associate myself with the Special Mention.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS (Assam): Sir, I also associate myself with it.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): Shri Vijay Jawaharlal Darda. Not present. Shrimati Brinda Karat. Not present. Shri Manohar Joshi.

Concern over security of senior citizens in the country

श्री मनोहर जोशी (महाराष्ट्र): महोदय, हमारे देश में वरिष्ठ नागरिकों के खिलाफ अपराध बढ़ते ही जा रहे हैं। सभी जगह वरिष्ठ नागरिकों का जीवन असुरक्षित हो गया है। वरिष्ठ नागरिक खून, लूटपाट, डकैती, शोषण तथा बलात्कार जैस जघन्य अपराधों के बलि चढ़ रहे हैं। यह एक राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर चिंता का विषय बन गया है। हमारे वरिष्ठ नागरिकों को एक सुनिश्चित और सुरक्षित जीवन प्रणाली देने के लिए सरकार को वचनबद्ध होना चाहिए। उनकी सुरक्षा हमारा ध्येय होना चाहिए। यह सभागृह वरिष्ठ नागरिकों की सुरक्षा को लेकर चिंता जताता है और उनके शांतिपूर्ण जीवन के लिए इस सरकार से गुजारिश करता है।

श्री महेन्द्र मोहन (उत्तर प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं इससे अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करता हूं।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): Shri Lalit Kishore Chaturvedi. Not present. Shrimati Kanimozhi.

Demand to reduce the price of LPG

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI (Tamil Nadu): Sir, as the prices of diesel and petrol have come down globally, the Indian Government has also brought down the price of diesel and petrol by Rs.2 and Rs.5 respectively. This decision to restore the prices of petrol, to what it was before June 4, when the Government had raised it, has been appreciated by all. But it will be a great relief to the poor and middle class families if the price of LPG cylinder, which was raised by Rs.50, is also brought back to its previous price. This would benefit the working class families, which are already struggling to make both ends meet, due to price rise and other problems connected with the economic slowdown. I request the Union Government and the Ministry to take immediate action on the letter written by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu dated 6.12.08, to the hon. Prime Minister requesting the Government to bring down the price of LPG.

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Kerala): Madam, I associate myself with it. What is the response of the Government to this? ...*(Interruptions)*... Let the Government respond to this issue. It is a very important issue. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJE (West Bengal): Madam, we want the Government to respond...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): They have taken note of it.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): The hon. Member has made the Special Mention. The Government will respond to the hon. Member. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA (Jharkhand): The Minister was aware of the Special Mention. He should have come prepared. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Madam, Shri Ahluwalia's party was also in the Government. On Special Mentions, the Government never responds immediately. They only send a reply to the concerned Members.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): Mr. Ahluwalia, you know the procedure. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please, you have made your point. ...*(Interruptions)*... The Government will send a reply to the hon. Member. ...*(Interruptions)*... You know the procedure of the House, When a Special Mention is raised, the reply is sent to the hon. Member. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please resume your seats.

SHRI O.T. LEPCHA (Sikkim): Madam, I associate myself with the Special Mention raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS (Assam): I also associate myself with the Special Mention.

Demand for use of Naphta in urea production

SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI (Kerala): Madam, many major fertiliser units, including units at Barauni, Durgapur, Haldia, Sindri, Gorakhpur and Cuncan Fertiliser Units at Kanpur are remaining closed due to the high cost of naphta thereby causing a shortfall of about 2 million tonnes in the production of urea in the country. The revamping of these units remains pending owing to the policy of the Government to run these units in gas. But the present situation warrants a review of the policy, particularly, when the possibility of adequate supply of natural gas is in doubt and also considering the high cost.

Since the Government decided to do away with the 10 per cent import duty on naphta, the cost has come down to half of the natural gas. It is, therefore, important to give priority to the fertiliser sector for the use of naphta so that the units become economically viable and the closed down units are revamped enhancing the production of fertilisers adequately to overcome the present shortage of fertiliser in the country. While using naphta, in the manufacture of fertiliser, in a prioritised manner, the primary chemical value addition will be in its maximum whereas in power generation, utilisation will be limited to its secondary thermal value only.

In the light of the above, I urge upon the Government to initiate steps specifically to revamp and start the production in the Cochin Division, FACT Urea-Ammonia Complex, at the earliest.